



Virginia Independent Living Program

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Virginia Department of Social Services
Independent Living Program
Division of Family Services
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Richmond, Virginia 23219
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About VDSS

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) administers social services programs, consistent with federal and state law and policy of the State Board of Social Services, through local departments of social services throughout the state and its home office in Richmond. The VDSS mission is "People helping people triumph over poverty, abuse, and neglect to shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities."

For More Information:

If you have questions and would like more information about the Virginia Department of Social Services Independent Living Program:

- Talk to your case worker or your independent living coordinator
- Online: www.vailp.com
- Email: va.ilp@dss.virginia.gov



-INDEPENDENCE-



What Is The Independent Living Program?

The Independent Living Program (ILP) provides important services to eligible youth in foster care and young adults formerly in foster care. The program helps youth obtain the basic life skills, education and employment preparation necessary to become successful, independent and self-sufficient adults.

The ILP's goal is to help foster care youth become STARS by achieving: Self-sufficiency, Transition, Accountability, Responsibility, and Stability.

What Types Of Services Are Available?

ILP services are based on individual needs, interests, abilities and goals to achieve self-sufficiency, including:

- Career Counseling
- Case Management, Assessment and Referral Services
- Health Education
- Housing Assistance
- Independent Living Stipend
- Job Readiness Training
- Life Skills Training
- Mentoring
- Parenting Classes
- Post-Secondary School Planning
- Secondary School Assistance
- Vocational Assistance
- Youth Advocacy

What Educational Costs Are Covered?

The ILP has educational funds available to assist foster care youth and young adults formerly in foster care in attending post secondary education and eligible training programs.

Educational expenses must be pre-approved by local departments of social services and are subject to the availability of funds. Educational and training program costs that may be covered include:

- Application Fees
- Books, Supplies, Tools, Equipment and Uniforms
- Driver's Education
- Graduation Fees
- Life Skills Classes
- Registration Fees
- Summer or Evening School Tuition
- Testing Tutoring (SAT, ACT, etc.)

Who Is Eligible?

The ILP is available to current and former foster care youth beginning at age 14. Eligible youth may continue receiving services until age 21, if in the custody or placement responsibility of a local department of social services. Qualifying placements include foster homes, residential treatment centers and group homes.

Education and Training Vouchers Program

The Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) Program is a federal program with available funding of up to \$5,000 per eligible student each year for post-secondary education and vocational training.

Who Is Eligible?

Foster care youth between the ages of 16 - 21 and those who were adopted after age 16. Young people ages 21 - 23 also are eligible to receive funding if they were participating in the program at the time they turned age 21.

Virginia Community College System Tuition Grants

This program pays for tuition and fees at Virginia Community Colleges (<http://www.vccs.edu>) for high school graduates and those receiving a General Education Development (GED) Certificate at the time of graduation or completion of the GED program. Individuals who were in foster care, custody of a social service agency or were special needs adoptees at the time they received their high school diploma or GED are eligible.

Make A Difference Through V-YAC

The Virginia Youth Advisory Council (V-YAC) provides a forum in which foster care youths can gain information about the foster care system and exchange ideas that will improve foster care.

The purpose of V-YAC is to communicate and distribute information to youths in foster care and empower them to have a positive effect in their communities.

